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c. 39 is disjunctive. The facts are certainly against this argument. Such an interpretation also overlooks the fact that "the law of the land", whatever may have been meant by it, is not an alternative to "judgment of peers". The only alternative to the latter, possible at the time, was the mode of trial which the barons desired to avoid. It is probable that "vel" is conjunctive in both places where it occurs in c. 39.

I am obliged to take equal exception to many details in the chapter on the trial of John, but this REVIEW has hardly the space for a full commentary. A new view as to the condemnation of John is added to those already advocated. As I understand the author, John was not condemned to forfeiture in 1202, or in 1203, either in consequence of the appeal of the barons of Poitou, or of the murder of Arthur, but he was so condemned in April, 1213, by Philip's court at Soissons, for his various nefarious acts. This theory, however, is based on interpretations of law and of language which cannot be admitted. One is surprised to learn that John might instantly have ordered Arthur's execution without form of trial, as a vassal in arms against his lord, and one would like to have chapter and verse for this law. A portion of the manifesto issued by Louis on his landing in England in 1216 Mr. Vernon Harcourt regards as a "highly creditable performance". There is really no difference in character between the different clauses of that document, and it is all highly creditable to the ingenuity of a man who wishes to come as near as possible to the truth in the form of words he uses while conveying a wholly false impression.

It is of these two chapters that the most serious criticism of detail is to be made. It must be added, however, that even in these chapters there is much interesting and valuable suggestion by the way, and this is particularly true of the chapters which follow them in which the history of the trial of peers is followed down to the establishment of the modern practice at the end of the Middle Ages. In these chapters will be found fuller accounts of some famous trials of peers in the period covered than can be found elsewhere, with long extracts from unpublished sources. In the case of the Earl of Huntingdon, who died in January, 1400, the author advances the interesting theory that the record of his trial before the lord high steward contained in the Year Books, and serving as the earliest precedent for trials of this form, was a deliberate forgery in the interests of Henry VII. to furnish historical justification for the trial of the Earl of Warwick.

GEORGE B. ADAMS.

The Great Revolt in 1381. By CHARLES OMAN, M.A., Professor in the University of Oxford. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1906. Pp. viii, 219.)

THE present work is the first complete monograph upon this important subject, all previous works having treated certain phases of the

revolt only. It may be characterized as a successful effort, and is not only a well written but also a reliable account, based throughout upon contemporary authorities. The narrative has profited much by the use of the researches of André Réville, and of the *Anonymous French Chronicle* published in the thirteenth volume of the *English Historical Review*. The critical value of the work frequently suffers by the author's failure to make use of all the testimony that the sources supply. It cannot be termed a final or even an exhaustive account of the Great Revolt. The few scattered remarks of the author upon the relative value of the sources do not satisfy the demands of the modern student. Nor has he used the entire literature of the subject. He seems to have been unacquainted with the *Studies in the Sources of the Revolt in 1381*, two articles published in the *AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW*, vol. VII. (1902), although Mr. Trevelyan used them in the new edition of his *England in the Age of Wycliffe* (1904).

The first chapter treats of the political and social conditions of England in 1381. The author rightly assigns great importance to the Statute of Laborers, but we cannot agree that the revolt was an unorganized movement, "chaotic in character", or of "sporadic nature". It is hardly accurate to say that manorial grievances had no part in the rising of the mesne towns against their spiritual lords, when we find the townsmen of St. Alban's, for instance, demanding free pasturage for their cattle, free hunting and fishing and the abolition of the seignorial mill. The resistance to the Statute of Laborers was as bitter in the towns as in the country. The preliminary agitative activity of certain Londoners in Essex is well known. The circumstances that, on Corpus Christi and the day following, bands, or at least delegations, of insurgents arrived at London from all over England, even from counties as distant as Somerset and Oxfordshire (*Rot. Parl.*, III. 106; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1381, p. 16), points to a prearranged movement. There is evidence to show that Essex was the hotbed of the revolt which was probably organized from the country about Colchester, the home of both John Ball and Wat Tyler. John Wraw, the chief leader of the Suffolk revolt, was vicar of Ringsfield nearby. He appeared in Suffolk at the head of a band of Essex men, as did Tyler in Kent.

The second chapter is devoted to the Parliament of Northampton and the Poll-tax. Professor Oman here supplies some valuable information obtained from a writ of inquiry as to the Fraudulent Levying of the Poll Tax, dated March 16, 1381, from which, as well as from other sources, it appears that the population, especially as regards the unmarried women, was systematically understated. But he attaches too much importance to this writ when he states that without it "there would probably have been no single movement worthy of being called a rebellion". As Professor Tait has observed, its penalties only applied to those who impeded the commissioners in collecting the tax.

Chapter III. treats of the Outbreak in Kent and Essex; chapter IV.,

the Rebels in London. Based upon careful studies of the original sources, this is the best and most detailed account of the crucial part of the revolt that has as yet appeared. But even here the use of the sources is not exhaustive. Certain inaccuracies occur. There is convincing proof in the sources to show that the Conference at Mile End took place at the seventh canonical hour, 1 p. m., not at 7 a. m. (AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW, VII. 282). In the narrative of the meeting of the king and the rebels it is a pity that the author failed to use the interesting version of the Monk of Evesham, whose usually independent account of the revolt he seems to have altogether overlooked, and that of the *Anonymous French Chronicle*. The latter, in addition to the demands of the insurgents otherwise transmitted, enumerates another which appears to be a demand for the annulment of the Statute of Laborers: "Che nul ne deveroit servire ascune home, mes a sa volunte de mesme et par coueernant taille." In like manner the author has failed in his account of the conference at Smithfield, which resulted in the death of Tyler, to make use of a very important source, the memorial of the insurrection issued by the city council to record the mayor's important part in that event (see Riley, *Memorials of London*, 450-453). We cite these instances because the meetings at Mile End and Smithfield were the two crises upon which the fate of the revolt depended.

Professor Oman's attitude toward the insurrection and its leaders, although not unfair, is rather hostile than sympathetic. On one occasion he terms Tyler a ruffian, and he places more weight upon the hostile Walsingham's statement of the rebel leader's designs than it merits (p. 72). It is hardly just to speak of the insurgents who remained in London after the concessions at Mile End as "demagogues, criminals and fanatics" (p. 69). Now that we know the nature of the demands at Smithfield, it seems more just to say that they were the more radical of the insurgents, to whom the Mile End concessions were not sufficient, and, in particular, the advocates of a reformation of the Church in accordance with the doctrines of John Ball.

Chapters v.-ix. are devoted to the repression of the revolt in London and the various shires. The account of the local revolts contains little additional to the researches of Réville and Powell. The last chapter treats of the Results of the Insurrection. There are six valuable appendixes.

The Political History of England. In twelve volumes. Edited by WILLIAM HUNT and REGINALD L. POOLE. Volume V. *The History of England from the Accession of Henry VII. to the Death of Henry VIII., 1485-1547.* By H. A. L. FISHER, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford. (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 1906. Pp. xx, 518.)

THE appearance of this book marks the entrance of its author upon a comparatively new field; Mr. Fisher has been hitherto known chiefly